

# New Directions



Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Annual Report 2006

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams!  
Live the life you've imagined.

~ Henry David Thoreau



## *Who We Are...*

The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities is established and funded under the federal Developmental Disabilities Act, along with Comprehensive Advocacy, Inc. (Co-Ad), Idaho's protection and advocacy organization, and the Center on Disabilities and Human Development at the University of Idaho.

## *Our Mission*

The Council promotes the capacity of people with developmental disabilities and their families to determine, access, and direct the services and/or supports they need to live the lives they choose, and to build the community's ability to support their choices.

# New Directions

2006 was indeed a year of new directions. Topping the list was the work accomplished to advance the "My Voice - My Choice" Home and Community Based Services Medicaid Waiver self-directed supports option. With the new program beginning in three Idaho communities, adults with developmental disabilities for the first time will be given the choice to self-direct their supports and services. The program start-up culminates six years of advocacy, planning, and coordination by the Council and partner stakeholders.

Across the state, individuals with varying disabilities voted in the primary and general elections for the first time as result of the "Determined to Vote" project.

With completion of training for the final three regional teams, the Idaho Self Advocate Leadership Network fulfilled a goal to have a statewide presence. Members will next adopt by-laws and articles of incorporation for organizing as a non-profit organization.

Finally, individuals with disabilities are now earning higher wages and maintaining their Medicaid eligibility as result of legislation authorizing "Medicaid for Workers with Disabilities" or "Medicaid Buy-In". Attempts to establish this incentive in Idaho date back to 1996.

The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities celebrates the beginning of new opportunities on the pages of this annual report. We recognize that little would have been accomplished without the support of collaborative partners, cooperative state agencies and dedicated individuals. The Council is extremely grateful to all who worked so hard to accomplish so much.



***Rick Betzer, Chairman 2006-07***

**Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities**

# Council Goals

➤ **Community Supports:** Improve the ability of Idaho communities to include and meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities.

➤ **Education:** Improve the ability of families and students with developmental disabilities to advocate and shape their child's and their own education to fully participate in their school community; and, Increase the ability of teachers and administrators to include students with developmental disabilities in general education classrooms and the school community.

➤ **Employment:** Increase the number of people with developmental disabilities in jobs of their choice and at a competitive wage

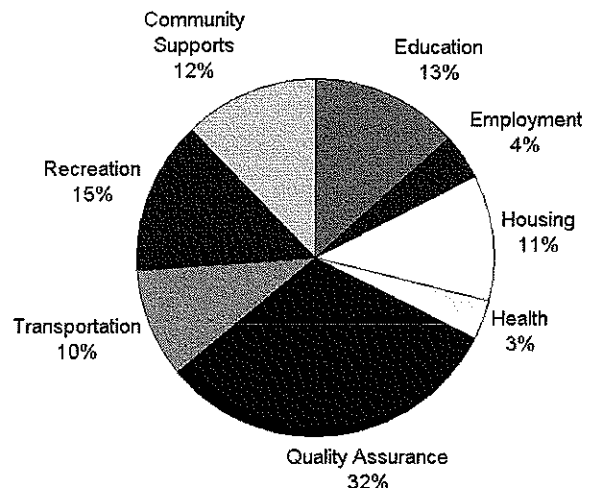
➤ **Health:** Increase the resources available to Idahoans with developmental disabilities to access the medical and other health services they need.

➤ **Housing:** Improve the ability of Idaho communities to include and meet the housing needs of people with developmental disabilities.

➤ **Quality Assurance:** Improve the ability of people with developmental disabilities and their families to control their lives, take risks and manage their own resources.

➤ **Recreation:** Increase recreational opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

➤ **Transportation:** Enhance transportation services for Idahoans with developmental disabilities, particularly in rural areas.



# New Directions

## My Voice My Choice: Self Directed Community Supports

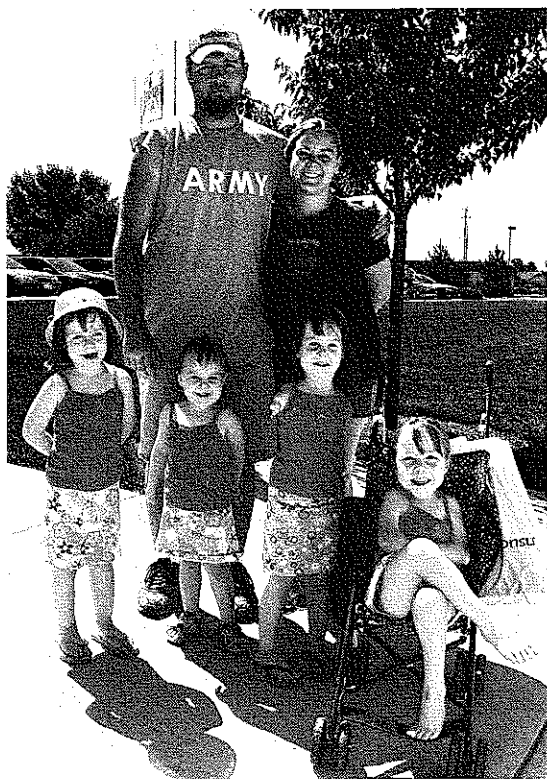
The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare introduced the "My Voice My Choice" self-directed Home & Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver option in Pocatello, Moscow and Boise. Individuals eligible to receive HCBS have an additional choice of traditional or self-directed options. Council and Medicaid staff co-hosted and presented information about the waiver at six different meetings in the roll-out cities.

## Participant Guide for Self-Direction

Council staff wrote, designed and formatted the *Guide to a Self-Directed Life*. This manual for individuals with developmental disabilities who choose to self-direct their services under the My Voice My Choice option was written in plain language for better access. Council staff ensured participation of individuals with developmental disabilities in guide development through review and input from Idaho SALN members and meeting with a local focus group of eleven self-advocates.



# New Directions



## Family Directed Services

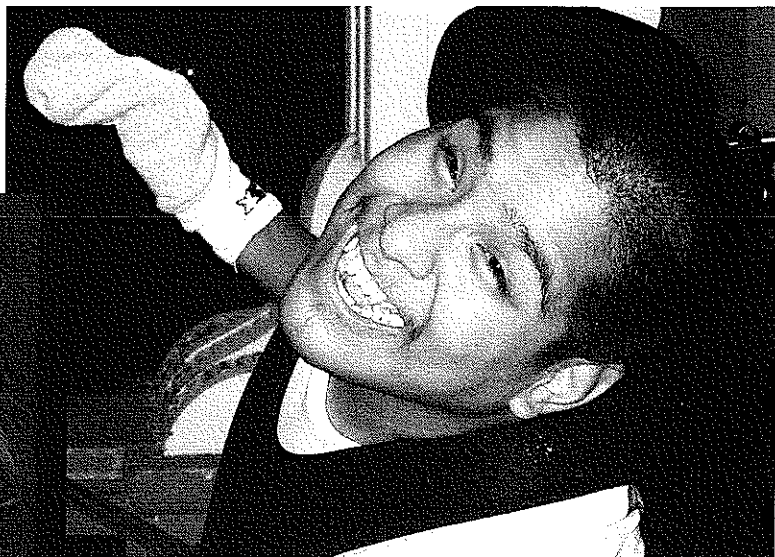
2006 legislative intent language directed the Council and the Division of Medicaid to study the feasibility of a family-directed service model for Idaho, similar to the self-directed services model for adults. A stakeholder group convened and developed a report for the 2007 Idaho Legislature which stated that a family-directed service model could be developed and would be a benefit to Idahoans.

## Determined to Vote

The Office of the Secretary of State contracted with the Council, in collaboration with Comprehensive Advocacy, Inc., to provide statewide voter education to people with disabilities and senior citizens.

Six teams consisting of two people with disabilities and one support staff per team provided training to 661 people preceding the primary and general elections. 52 people with disabilities voted for the first time in the 2006 elections as a result of the training.





## The Idaho Self-Advocate Leadership Network (SALN)

A SALN team is in place in each of the seven Health & Welfare Regions. Each team is presenting on self-advocacy approximately once a month to transition-age students and/or to adults with developmental disabilities within their respective regions.



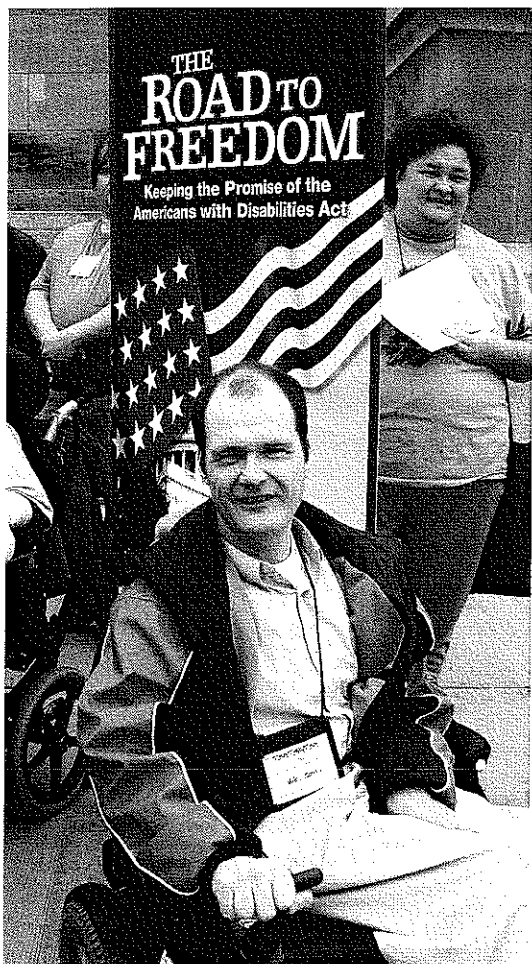
## Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) Conference Presentations

Idaho self advocates Jen Magelky, Moscow, and James Steed, Pocatello, gave a presentation on rights of voters with disabilities to a very receptive audience in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition Larry Fries, Pocatello, and Thomas McKnight, Moscow, captivated their audience's attention with their presentation on assertiveness skills. Nine self advocates attended the 8th annual national conference.

# 2006 Accomplishments

## Idaho Partners in Policymaking Focus Groups

The Council and the University of Idaho Center on Disability and Human Development worked collaboratively to develop and distribute an opinion survey to all Idaho Partners in Policymaking graduates. Survey results provided the basis for agendas for regional focus group meetings held in Coeur d'Alene, Moscow, Pocatello and Boise. Each gathering of graduates provided input for making improvements in the Idaho Partners in Policymaking program. A report of findings will help guide the development of the curriculum for the next Partners class.



## Direct Support Professional Training

The Council was one of 15 sponsors for the annual direct support staff training conference coordinated by Community Partnerships of Idaho. Council funds enabled 33 direct support staff to attend the conference and covered partial costs for two keynote speakers. A total of 666 direct support professionals, parents and self advocates attended the conference.

## Disability Mentoring Day

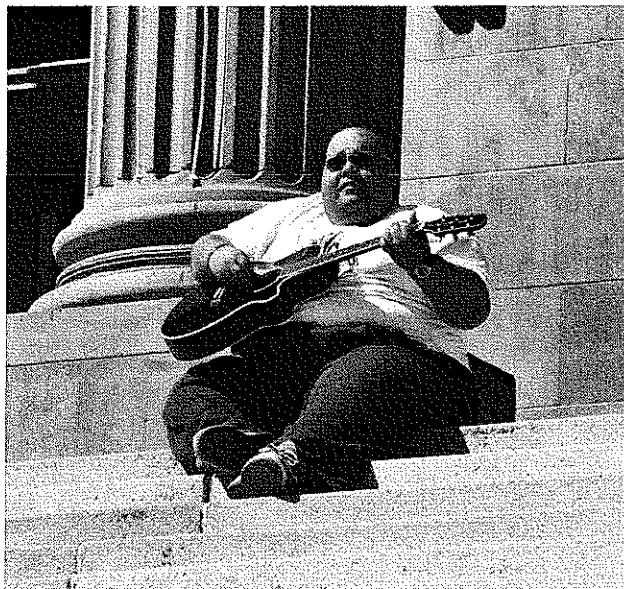
Twenty-seven (27) young adults from 10 schools or programs in the Idaho Falls area spent one day at a job site of their choice as part of Disability Mentoring Day. Volunteers from 29 community organizations and local businesses served as mentors. Funding provided by the Council was matched with in-



kind donations from a local civic club and by businesses and community organizations. The event organized by the Idaho Falls Community Transition Team featured a televised mayoral proclamation signing.

## New Freedom Initiative Conference Presentation

Over 125 people attended a two-part session on "How to Meaningfully Involve Consumers and other Stakeholders in Real Choice Systems Change" presented by Council staff in collaboration with Long Term Care Authority staff from Oklahoma. Over 750 attendees from grantee states and several territories attended this national conference.



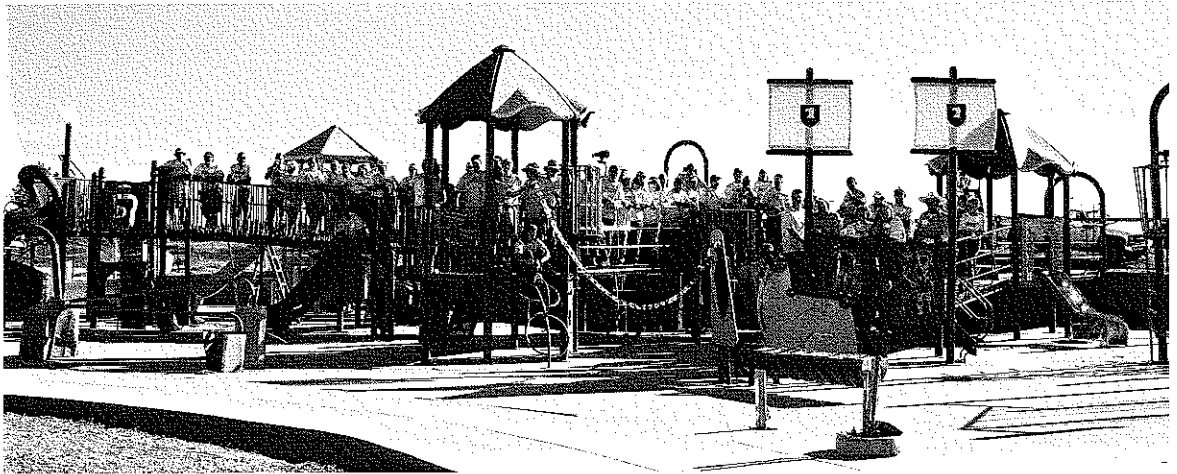
## Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

Staff from the Bureau of Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security and the Council on Developmental Disabilities participated in the Federal Emergency Management Conference in Washington, DC. Following the conference, planning meetings were held by the Bureau with representative agencies where information about managing emergency operations for people with disabilities and who are elderly was compiled. The information was then incorporated into Idaho Emergency Operations Planning Guide.

## Home Of Your Own

Opening Doors, Inc. began its second year of operation and received a second funding grant from the Council. The organization provides financial and logistical assistance to individuals with disabilities in rural areas to purchase their own homes. With additional organizational grant monies and donations, Opening Doors now has the

capacity to buy down home mortgage loan costs for qualified participants. The organization established collaborative working relationships with Idaho Housing and Finance Association and Southwest Idaho Southwestern Idaho Cooperative Housing Authority. One family with an adult child with a developmental disability successfully closed on a loan, and moved into their new home.



## Universally Accessible Playgrounds

Council funds have been dedicated to the installation of Idaho's second universally accessible playground, this time in eastern Idaho. Parent to Parent, Inc. targeted 2007 for the installation of the playground in an Idaho Falls city park. The organization has experienced great success in raising the \$250,000 need to complete the project.

Idaho's first universally accessible playground, Adventure Island in Meridian neared completion with installation of "Up, Up and Away", the swing set component for the playground. With the 2007 opening of "Fishwreck", a



water play area, fundraising and construction will end. The playground will be managed and maintained by Meridian Parks and Recreation.

## Treasure Valley Resource Fair

The Council was co-sponsor for this first annual event to inform families of children with disabilities about services and supports available in the Treasure Valley. More than 200 families attended the event and received information from 57 vendors. The event was held at Adventure Island Play-

ground, Idaho's first universally accessible playground.

## Youth Leadership Development

Council staff helped plan and conduct a Youth Leadership Development Summit as a pre-conference meeting with the Tools for Life Conference. Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) graduates, Idaho SALN members, family members and others, provided input into development of future youth leadership activities.

## Tools for Life Conference

Council staff helped plan and host "Tools for Life": Secondary Transition and Assistive Technology Fair. More than 500 participants attended the 2 ½ day event in

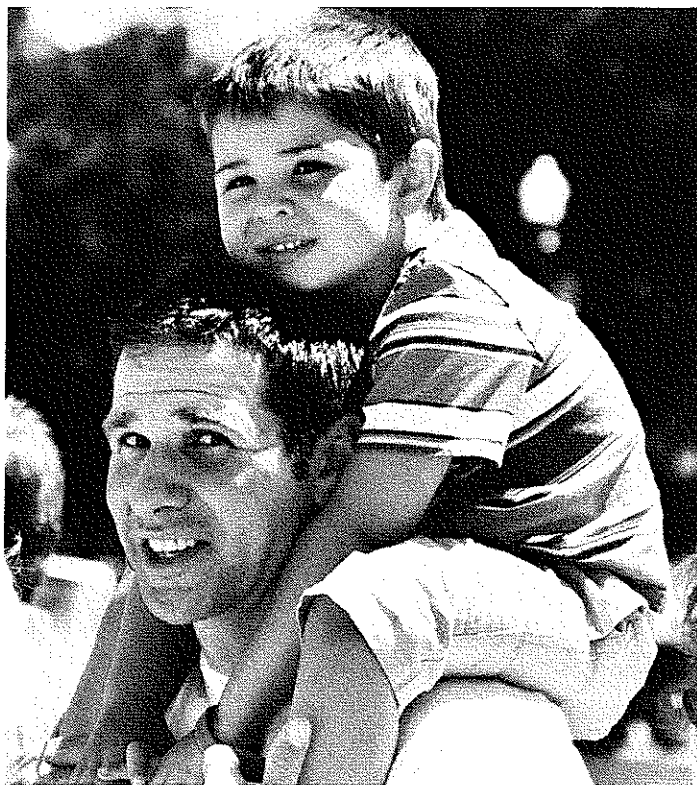


Boise. Presentations covered assistive technology and transition related issues. Council funds supported this annual event for transition-age students from around Idaho.

## Roots to Wings: Parent League

Over 60 parents and several support groups are enrolled in this statewide virtual grassroots group. Information and updates on education policy changes, children's and family issues, recreational and educational opportunities are sent electronically from the Council office.

Parents also get information on opportunities to participate on councils, committees, task forces and other advocacy activities at the state and national level.



## Parent Leadership Development Project

Council funds supported this retreat for parents held in south Idaho by Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. Thirteen parents attended 2 two-day retreats where they developed and improved their leadership skills and abilities in planning, delivering and evaluating services. Each participant left the program with personal leadership goals.

## Idaho Autism Education Conference

Presenters provided information to over 215 parents and over 280 educators at this one-day conference hosted by Princeton Autism Technology at Boise State University and available at five other Idaho sites via video conferencing. Council funds provided scholarships for 16 parents and 7 teachers to participate in the conference.

## Visions and Values: Council Newsletter

The Council published and mailed 4,600 copies of its regular newsletter Visions and Values twice during the year. The second session legislative edition was updated with an insert and mailed on request to 300 individuals.

## Medicaid for Workers with Disabilities

The 2006 Idaho Legislature passed a bill that allows workers with disabilities to retain Medicaid eligibility while earning higher wages. Often referred to as "Medicaid Buy-In", the new work incentive extends the wage earnings cap, but requires premium payments from higher wage earners. The Council supported the lead lobbying efforts of the State Independent Living Council.

## Honors

Former Council Chair Theresa Wilding of St. Anthony was honored by the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) at its 2006 fall conference. Ms. Wilding was presented with the Clifford Fortner Leadership Award for demonstrating outstanding leadership and character for her efforts at building bridges between NACDD and Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE). Theresa also was named Outstanding Individual of the Year by Idaho Parents Unlimited.



Current Council Chair Rick Betzer and his wife Tina of Shelley received the 2006 Idaho Parents Unlimited "Outstanding Parents of the Year Award". Married 30 years with 5 natural and 11 adopted children, the Betzers seemed an obvious choice for the award, especially since all 11 adopted children have disabilities.

## **Boards, Councils & Special Committees On Which the Council is Represented**

**Consortium of Idahoans  
with Disabilities**

**Interagency Workgroup  
on Public Transportation**

**Family Directed Services  
Task Force**

**Adventure Island  
Playground Planning  
Committee**

**Interagency Coordinating  
Council for Secondary  
Transition**

**Idaho Community Care  
Council**

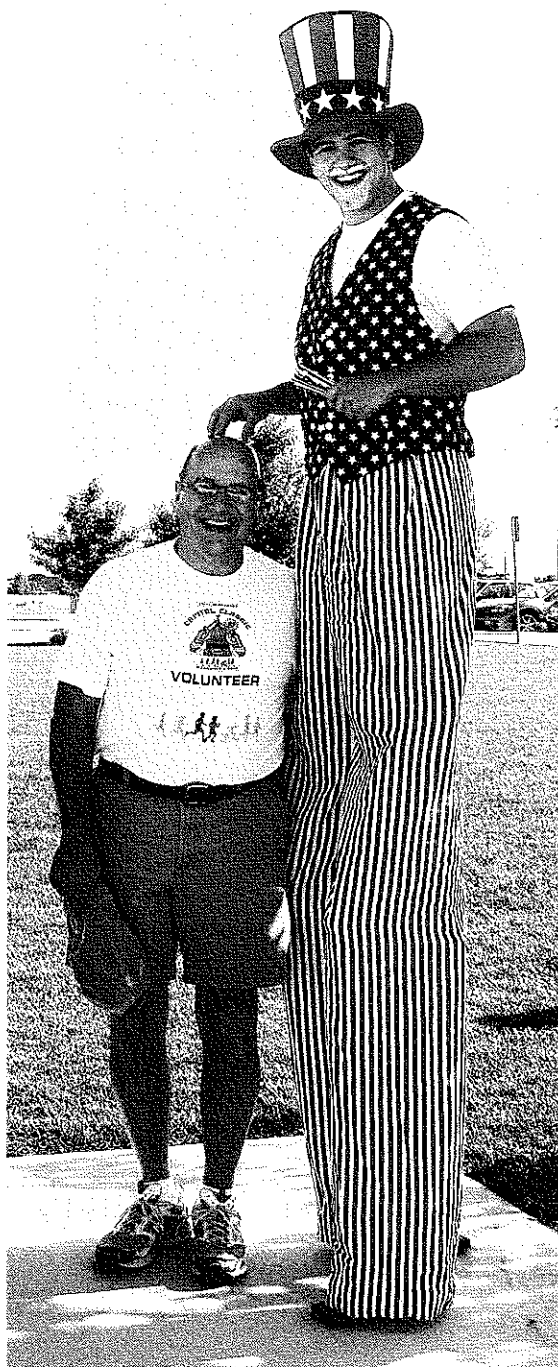
**Co-Ad Advisory Board**

**Family Support Policy  
Council**

**Center on Disabilities and  
Human Development Con-  
sumer Council**

**Idaho Training Coopera-  
tive, Intensive Behavioral  
Intervention Committee**

**Idaho State School and  
Hospital Advisory Board**



# Federal FY 2006 Council Members

Chair

Theresa Wilding, Self-Advocate

Vice Chair

Rick Betzer, Parent

Consumer Representative

Kristyn Herbert, Self-Advocate

Self-Advocates

Parents

Tygh Hales

Debbie DePaola

Mary Johnson

Bob Jackson

Mike Smith

Elizabeth Riccardi

James Steed

Roger Shanahan

Dona Butler, Guardian

Agency/Organizational Members

Jim Baugh

Comprehensive Advocacy, Inc.

Mary Bostick

State Department of Education

Tanya Brindle

Vocational Rehabilitation

Donna Denney

Commission on Aging

Paige Fincher

Dept. of Health & Welfare, Maternal & Child Health

Julie Fodor

Center on Disability and Human Development, U of I

Kim Kane

United Cerebral Palsy

David Rogers

Dept. of Health & Welfare, Division of Medicaid

FY 2006 Staff

Marilyn Sword,  
Executive Director

Christine Pisani,  
Program Specialist

Ron Enright,  
Program Specialist

Tracy Warren,  
Program Specialist

Pam Stanley, Financial Technician

Judy Wauer, Administrative Assistant



All Idahoans participate as equal members of society,  
empowered to reach their full potential  
as responsible and contributing citizens  
of their communities.

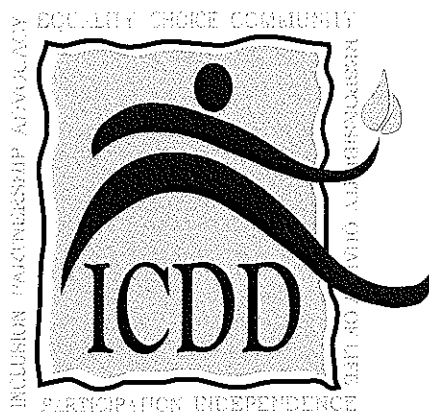
# *Vision*

# *Values*

Independence ♦ Respect ♦ Participation

Integration ♦ Choice ♦ Partnership ♦ Responsibility

Quality of Life ♦ Inclusion ♦ Community ♦ Equality



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